

Praising Values to Promote an Image: A Rhetorical
Criticism of the "I'm the NRA" Advertising Campaign

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by

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PRAISING VALUES TO PROMOTE AN IMAGE: A RHETORICAL
CRITICISM OF THE "I'M THE NRA" ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

The ad appeared in Life magazine. It featured a freckle-faced Oklahoma schoolboy talking about his hobbies. Said the boy, "I like to play football best. But I like my dog and I like my new BB gun." It sounds like a typical advertising ploy, but the ad ended with these words from eight-year-old Bryan Hardin: "I'm the NRA."

Bryan Hardin, along with twenty-one other members of the National Rifle Association, has lent his name and his face to a series of magazine advertisements run by the NRA which began in January of 1982 and is scheduled to run through the end of 1985. The purpose of this campaign is to change the controversial, often negative, image of the NRA into a more wholesome, positive one. In the words of John Adkins, Media Director for the Public Education Department of the NRA, "The 'I'm the NRA' ad campaign was launched as part of a new 'corporate identification' campaign. . . These ads are purely 'image' building and are not really aimed at persuading anyone to join the Association or convince them to embrace our political philosophy."¹

As such, these ads are a prime example of corporate advocacy advertising. This type of advertising does not attempt to sell a physical product, but rather an organization's desired image or view on a specific issue. After taking a closer look at the background of the campaign, the ads can be examined using a method designed for this type of advertising.

BACKGROUND

The "I'm the NRA" advertising campaign is no small effort. While the NRA came up with the basic idea for it, the specific ads were designed by the advertising agency of Ackerman and McQueen.² At a cost of over two million dollars a year,³ the ads are run in such general interest, women's, and youth magazines as McCall's, Esquire, Better Homes and Gardens, U.S. News and World Report, Field and Stream, People, Reader's Digest, Southern Living, Sports Illustrated, Newsweek, and Boy's Life, among others. They are expected to reach two hundred million readers in the course of their four-year run.⁴

Although the ads feature various subjects, they all have the same basic theme and format. As Adkins described the ads, "The focus is the warm, tastefully photographed, smiling individual holding a firearm in a non-threatening manner. There's a definite but subtle message conveyed. There also are the closing 'outline facts' on the ads which provide brief

information regarding NRA programs, but these are all secondary to the identification theme."⁵

As can be seen from looking at the attached ads, each one has a two-thirds page picture of that smiling NRA member with his or her gun. Above the picture is mini-biography of the subject, along with a brief personal statement on guns, hunting, and the NRA. These statements are non-controversial, and they always end with "I'm the NRA" in large letters. Below the picture is a brief mention of NRA safety courses or competitive shooting programs (Adkins' 'outline facts'), and in the bottom right corner of the picture is the subject's NRA membership card. While the advertisements feature a variety of subjects, they always follow this identical format.

METHOD

With the format of the NRA ads understood, an appropriate method can be used to analyze and criticize them. Such a method was the one used by Richard E. Crable and Steven L. Vibbert in their article "Mobil's Epideictic Advocacy: 'Observations' on Prometheus-Bound," which appeared in the December, 1983, Communication Monographs. Crable and Vibbert examined a corporate advocacy campaign from Mobil Oil titled "Observations," and in their article they stressed the epideictic nature of such advertising. While it might be easy to think of epideictic rhetoric, that of praise or blame, simply in terms of its stereotypical uses, such as a Fourth of July

speech, they argue that as the epideictic is used in corporate advocacy advertising, it has great potential persuasive power.

Crable and Vibbert quote Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, who give the purpose of the epideictic as "to increase the intensity of adherence to values held in common by the audience and the speaker."⁶ It is after this value promotion that corporate advocacy advertising attempts to link its image or idea to the promoted values in an attempt to sell it to the audience. The specific arguments used to promote the idea or image spring from the epideictic rhetoric and the values it deals with.⁷

The function of this type of advertising, therefore, is to be premise-building. This idea can be likened to Stephen Toulmin's "warrant-establishing" arguments, the authors note. A premise-building or warrant-establishing argument attempts to forge a link between previously unrelated ideas. This is opposed to warrant-using, which uses an existing link to prove a point.⁸ Being premise-building, corporate advocacy advertising is not a call to action, but rather the building of a foundation in the public's minds that can be used as the basis for a later call to action.

With this as the base of corporate advocacy advertising, Crable and Vibbert then give three ways in which this persuasive process can be examined: as a response to a specific situation, in its argumentative approach, and in the cultural foundations of these arguments.⁹

RESPONSE TO A SPECIFIC SITUATION

As Crable and Vibbert suggest, the "I'm the NRA" ads did indeed arise as the response to a specific situation. That situation was the controversial, negative image surrounding the NRA. This negative image was the result of the NRA's emphasis on two main ideas: hunting and gun control. "Millions of Americans view anyone who hunts as a Bambi-killer, someone who takes pleasure in the savage murder of innocent, sweet little furry creatures," wrote one national magazine.¹⁰ As if Bambi-killing were not enough, thanks to its powerful lobbying efforts against gun control, the NRA had been shown in an additionally unfavorable light. Charles Orasin, executive vice president of Handgun Control Inc., described the view many people had of the NRA as "the group that continues to fight sensible handgun controls."¹¹ "Rednecks, criminals, and right-wing extremists" is how one NRA spokesman described the common image of NRA members.¹²

While many Americans held such a view of the NRA, the majority of the population was still moderate, having no strong pro- or anti-NRA feelings.¹³ The danger was if these negative images spread to the uncommitted. Given impetus by the assassination of John Lennon and the attempt on President Ronald Reagan's life, 1981 saw a great growth in anti-NRA publicity and gun control measures.¹⁴ The target audience, therefore, is the moderates, "the people in the middle who haven't taken sides either way," in the words of NRA official

Morton Mumma.¹⁵ This campaign was designed to convince such people of the acceptability of the NRA, "to tell everybody that NRA members are your man on the street, not a bunch of monsters with fangs who are storing guns in their basements so they can take over the country."¹⁶

ARGUMENTATIVE APPROACH

Just as these advertisements are thus a response to a specific situation, so too do they have a definite argumentative approach. This argumentative base is composed of the specific ideas the NRA is trying to get across in support of its desired image. The four arguments these ads build are the following: guns are safe; shooting is rewarding; hunting does not harm the environment; and most importantly, NRA members are typical, normal people.

"Gun safety is number one with me," states John Riggins in his advertisement, summing up the first argument. But he is not the only NRA member with such sentiments. Many of the personal statements mention this idea. Says Bryan Hardin, "When I got it [the BB gun], I wanted to shoot that night, but my Dad said I had to learn the rules first. He taught me about safety and to always remember a gun is not a toy." Perhaps most pointed is this statement from pediatrician Robert Pierce:

I'm a pediatrician and people often ask, 'How can you allow your kids to shoot guns when you know how dangerous they are?' Well, I've never treated a child for a gunshot wound, but I've lost

count of those injured by bicycles, kitchen knives, poisons and many household items that injure children every year by the thousands. The vast majority of gun owners teach their kids never, never to be reckless with firearms.

Safety is not only stressed in these and other personal statements, however. Five of the biographies feature that fact that the subject is an instructor of gun safety courses. In addition, the cutlines on the bottom of five of the ads mention the gun safety courses taught by the NRA. So through these tactics, the NRA is emphasizing its concern with safety, thus contradicting the perception of guns and the NRA as dangerous.

And not only are guns, especially as promoted by the NRA, safe, shooting is also rewarding, these ads contend. They stress the enjoyment that can come from hunting and competitive shooting. Bryan Hardin is looking forward to going hunting with his grandfather. Says Tennessee Ernie Ford, "My sons live in Nashville, and when I go back there we hunt quail and squirrel. I'm very proud of those boys and I get a good feeling knowing that I helped them get started in hunting just like my dad helped me when I was a boy." "I'm a hunter and find it's good for the body and the mind," adds Wally Schirra. Eight of the ads' cutlines point out that the NRA also sponsors hunter education courses.

Competitive shooting is portrayed in a similarly positive manner. Eight of the subjects are champion shooters, as their biographies state. Another ad even features all the 1984 U.S. Olympic shooting medalists. Says Janice Schuler, an eighteen-year-old member of the U.S. Shooting Team in her ad, "I've been shooting competitively since I was seven years old. It's been a sacrifice, but it's been worth it because

I've had the chance to travel, meet people and learn a lot about myself. . . I want to make they Olympic Team and try to get a shooting scholarship for college." Says Noma McCullough, "[you] don't have to be champions to win at shooting. A person can win at trying. Practicing, getting better and enjoying yourself are the real rewards." She, her biography notes, was the first woman ever to win one specific shooting championship. And Brian Kubricky, a sixteen-year-old in a wheelchair, sums up the NRA's part in all this by saying, "I wouldn't even have the opportunity to shoot in the first place if it wasn't for the NRA. . . the NRA has given me a chance to do something I like and can enjoy the rest of my life." As with the safety, six of the ads also have cutlines mentioning the sanctioning and sponsoring of competitive shooting by the NRA. Once again, the NRA puts forth the argument that an aspect of guns, competitive shooting, is rewarding and also ties in its responsibility to that aspect, promoting its wholesome image.

Lest an audience member fear that one of these rewarding activities, hunting, harms the environment, the NRA tries to prove that this is not so. The ads portray NRA members as being especially concerned with the land and wildlife. "Because I'm a hunter and a shooter, I'm both an environmentalist and a member of the NRA," says Jim Leinicke, who also works for the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Conservation. Lloyd Williams, who works for the Missouri Department of Conservation as a safety instructor and outdoor

skills specialist, says in his job he stresses conservation, respect for wildlife, and the proper use of the land. Of the NRA he says, "They help me to do my job. . . It all boils down to teaching young people to respect nature." This respect for and love of the environment is shown to extend to all NRA members, not just those who work in that field. Says Tennessee Ernie Ford, "The NRA has given me a wonderful opportunity to get to know interesting people from all walks of life who love the great outdoors." Continues Sandra Curry, "We [NRA members] are people who share common interests like environmental conservation and wildlife preservation." In addition, eight of the cutlines point out the NRA's hunter education services, stating "Hunters play an important role in wildlife conservation" and "The NRA's Hunter Services Division helps teach millions of Americans the principles of good sportsmanship and hunter safety procedures necessary for responsible wildlife management." Hunting and the NRA do not harm the environment, these ads thus argue, but actually work to preserve it.

The fourth argument put forth by this campaign goes beyond being just another argument. It is the dominant idea of the campaign: the assertion that NRA members are typical, ordinary people. The NRA members featured in the ads are presented as they are so that "I'm the NRA" would be reassuring, not frightening, coming from them. This care was exercised in both the choice of and the portrayal of the subjects.

In creating these advertisements, obvious thought was given as to which NRA members were chosen. The result is a mix of people with one thing in common: their normality. The ads feature both men and women; in ages, the subjects range from an eight-year-old schoolboy to an eighty-three-year-old grandfather; occupations include housewife, businesswoman, policeman, pediatrician, and high school student. While this might seem like too great a variety to have a common denominator, all of these people represent a facet of ordinary life. If the reader cannot relate directly to a subject's occupation, for instance, he or she should be at least familiar with the field or know people in it. All audience members, therefore, should be able to identify with the subjects chosen, perceiving them as ordinary people, just like themselves.

This process is helped along by the portrayal of these subjects, in both the picture and the copy. Each ad has a two-thirds page picture of an NRA member, and all of them are smiling and well-dressed. The backgrounds are soft-focused; they are soothing and do not distract. Each subject is holding a gun, stressing his or her link to the NRA, but the guns are never aimed at anything, and a subject's finger is never on the trigger. Fifteen of the ads picture the person holding a rifle, with the end of the barrel even out of the frame. Of the remaining six, one holds a rifle totally in frame, but with the barrel pointing away from the reader; one

is a boy with a BB gun; two are police officers, in uniform, with their regulation weaponry; and two hold handguns. Of these last two, one is a national pistol shooting champion, the other a policewoman who teaches safety courses and is also a shooting champion. This presentation of firearms shows them in a non-threatening, almost casual, manner; they are held by safety-conscious, respectable people, as the ads portray NRA members to be. What could be a frightening aspect of the NRA is used by that organization as a proof of its responsibility. They, along with the membership cards in the lower right corner of each picture, also represent the only visual links between an otherwise typical person and the NRA.

The written elements contribute equally to this portrait of the NRA member as an ordinary person. In each biography, the "common denominators" are mentioned: occupation, age, family. The personal statements also make much of the things the NRA members would have in common with the audience. Subjects talk about their families, their jobs, their ambitions, their concerns. Perhaps the ads where this is most important are the five celebrity ads. Roy Rogers, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Johnny Rutherford, John Riggins, and Jameson Parker all are featured in advertisements. This might seem to go against the ordinary people idea, but these subjects do not discuss their extraordinary accomplishments in their personal statements, but rather their ordinary feelings and sentiments. Johnny

Rutherford likens shooting to racing, but then talks about it in terms of a serious sport, not his racing career. John Riggins talks about growing up in Kansas. These personal statements present atypical people as typical in their thoughts and ideas. For all the subjects, the written portions of the ads focus on and help promote NRA members as plain people, just like the audience members.

These, then, are the four dominant arguments in this advertising campaign. It asserts that guns are safe, shooting is rewarding, and hunting does not harm the environment. Each of these promotes the NRA and its activities in a positive light, not the stereotypical negative one. They further combine with the major thrust--that NRA members are typical people--to argue for a wholesome, acceptable picture of the organization behind all this: the NRA

CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS

Now that the arguments have been examined, the cultural foundations of these arguments can be assessed. It is here that the epideictic nature of this campaign comes into play. These ads use the epideictic tool of praise to promote what these NRA members are portrayed as having and what lies behind all the arguments--traditional American cultural values. By stressing these values, the ads can pull in the audience members, who already accept them, and use them to draw the readers beyond the simple values to the arguments and, ultimately,

image they support. Three major values are used thus in this campaign: patriotism, a pioneering spirit, and the family.

"They [guns] kind of hook me up with history and make the days of George Washington, Lincoln and the pioneers much more real than the pages of a history book ever could," says Victor Atiyeh, the governor of Oregon, in his advertisement. With that statement and his position as a United States governor, he sums up the first cultural foundation. Another patriotic figure, Wally Schirra, one of the United States' original seven astronauts, says, "I've been in space three times and it always made me think about how good the Earth is. I guess that's why I never spend a day in the field [hunting] when I don't think about the beauty of our country. . . It's a great land and I'll take walking its ground over space travel anytime." A less well-known, but more patriotic-looking, figure is Jim Leinicke. He is a "buckskinner," a history buff dressed up in Revolutionary War garb who likes to "relive American history with [his] authentic costumes and firearms." The ads repeatedly emphasize patriotism in a positive sense, as a virtue. These all-American people, sentiments, and pastimes are what the NRA is all about, they furthermore suggest. It enables people to enjoy America, past and present. The most forthright statement of this idea, not to mention the shortest, comes from Herb Hollister, the eighty-three-year-old grandfather. Says he, "I think the NRA is just as American as apple pie."

A similar, yet distinct, value promoted by these ads and used as a foundation for the NRA's arguments is the pioneering spirit. Many of the subjects are people who have done things only dreamed about by most. Wally Schirra traveled in space. John Riggins is a star football player. Brian Kubricky is in a wheelchair, but nonetheless is an award-winning competitive shooter. These are people who go beyond the mundane lives of many Americans. They break new ground, partly thanks to the NRA. The emphasis on competitive shooting also demonstrates this idea. The three high-school-age champions are excelling in an aspect of their lives, and the Olympic medalists represent America itself at the forefront of a winning venture. Perhaps the most outstanding coup in this area is the use of Roy Rogers as a subject. He is the epitome of the good cowboy, the pioneering American on the Western frontier. Having such groundbreaking people featured serves not only to promote that idea, but also supports the NRA's arguments. These are presumably good, normal people, only they dared to venture beyond the limits of most people's lives. When these people utter such lines as Roy Rogers' "Without the NRA, hunting would not be the popular and safe sport it is today," who is to doubt them?

The final, but most emphasized, value is that of the family. Almost all of the biographies start with the person's family role, not his or her age or occupation. "Wife, mother" and "Husband, father" are how they begin, not "Business-

woman" or "Policeman." And according to their statements, family is just about the most important part of these people's lives. And guns and the NRA are good for the family. "Hunting is the best way I know for families to be together and have fun," says Roy Rogers. "Muzzleloading is a real family type shooting event," says Jim Leinicke. According to Sandra Curry, guns and hunting bring her closer to her husband than she otherwise would be. A common theme is the passing on of guns, shooting, and the NRA in families. Bryan Hardin mentions it, as do Dr. Robert Pierce, Tennessee Ernie Ford, John Riggins, and Noma McCollough. Janice Schuler and Mike Anti (two eighteen-year-old shooting champions) both received their NRA memberships as presents from their fathers. Beyond this, the NRA itself serves as a larger family unit, "the 'daddy' of competitive shooting" to Herb Hollister. In the words of Sandra Curry, "Being a member of the NRA is like belonging to a large family." So not only are families important, as these NRA members tell the audience, but because they value family they are involved in hunting, shooting, and the NRA.

These ads do more than mention such traditional American cultural values in passing. They prominently feature and promote them. This praise of accepted ideas forges a link with the audience members, taking them even beyond this to the arguments derived from the values. Patriotism and a love of the land lead one to hunting as safe for the environment. An admiration for the pioneering spirit develops into the idea

that shooting (shown to be part of this) is rewarding. A strong family passes on traditions, as these NRA members do, and a love of family necessitates a desire for safety, as the ads contend guns really are. And all of these values present in the readers are shown to be abundant in NRA members, proving once again that NRA members are just like other people. As an organization that stands for such accepted values and works actively for them, the NRA thus creates for itself a new, positive image to replace its tarnished, controversial one.

EVALUATION

While no final judgment of the campaign can be made, as it has seven months left to run, it does seem to have been effective so far. It cannot be judged in terms of action taken, since its purpose was simply to be premise-building, but it has used the epideictic form to build a solid cultural foundation. The ads employ basic, common, strong values and use them effectively to lead into clear arguments that combine to form a decidedly different image.

"Decent" and "respectable" are the words The Washington Monthly used to describe the image sold in what it also termed "one of the most effective advertising pitches to come down the pike in some time."¹⁷ Adkins stated that although the NRA has received negative responses from "those who are diametrically opposed to our viewpoint on gun ownership," the

response from the general public (the target audience) has been "almost totally positive."¹⁸

While this all sounds good, the fact remains that no total assessment of effect can yet be made. "It's really too early for us to say exactly what impact the 'I'm the NRA' campaign has had," Adkins continued,¹⁹ but if the apparent effectiveness, judged by this evaluation, is any indication, it should have an impact on the perception of the NRA in the minds of many average Americans.

CONCLUSION

This analysis and evaluation does indicate some implications beyond those for the NRA. Corporate advocacy advertising is indeed a powerful persuasive tool, but it is also one that can be examined using already existing rhetorical concepts, such as the idea of epideictic rhetoric. Epideictic rhetoric, itself, cannot be thought of in a traditional sense alone. While it might be considered just a ceremonial or occasional style of rhetoric, it can have a great persuasive punch, if properly applied, largely because of its ability to attract people through its confirmation of their values.

Beyond these, it can be seen how corporate advocacy advertising and the epideictic form can function together to create a persuasive artifact. While either can, and most often does, function without the other, the two can combine

in an influential fashion. A somewhat overlooked rhetorical tool seems to be finding a new use in the world of persuasion.

It is just this combination that the NRA is banking on. Seen separately, one of these ads may seem an advertising oddity, but a closer examination of the entire series shows they have a carefully crafted mix of value-praising and argumentation. They were created in an effort to change the negative image of the NRA, and it seems they should have some success in accomplishing their goal. If they are as effective as they appear, the new image of the NRA member will not be the redneck or criminal, but rather the boy next door, the girl next door, or even the child next door.

APPENDIX: SELECTED ADS

Sandra Curry
Tennessee Ernie Ford
Bryan Hardin
Brian Kubricky
Noma McCollough
Roy Rogers
Janice Schuler

SANDRA CURRY: Wife, mother; businesswoman; Certified Pistol,
Shotgun and Home Firearms Responsibility
Instructor; Member of the National Rifle Association.

"My husband and I hunt almost every weekend during the season. It brings us closer together because we both share a love for the outdoors. Being a member of the NRA is like belonging to a large family. We are people who share common interests like environmental conservation and wildlife preservation.

"Some of the people I know can't believe I'm involved in the shooting sports. They all say, 'You don't look like the type.' I don't know what the 'type' looks like, but I'm a lady at the office and on the range.

"When I shoot, I'm always concerned with safety and I have my NRA training to thank for that. The NRA Education and Training Division provides valuable information on almost everything. I don't know of any other organization that does so much to promote firearms safety."

I'm the NRA.



The NRA emphasizes firearms safety in all of the courses they sponsor — from the beginning marksmanship and "Home Firearms Responsibility" courses to the more advanced coach certification courses. If you would like to join the NRA and want more information about our programs and benefits, write Harlon Carter, Executive Vice President, P.O. Box 37484, Dept. SC-1, Washington, D.C. 20013

Paid for by the members of the National Rifle Association of America.

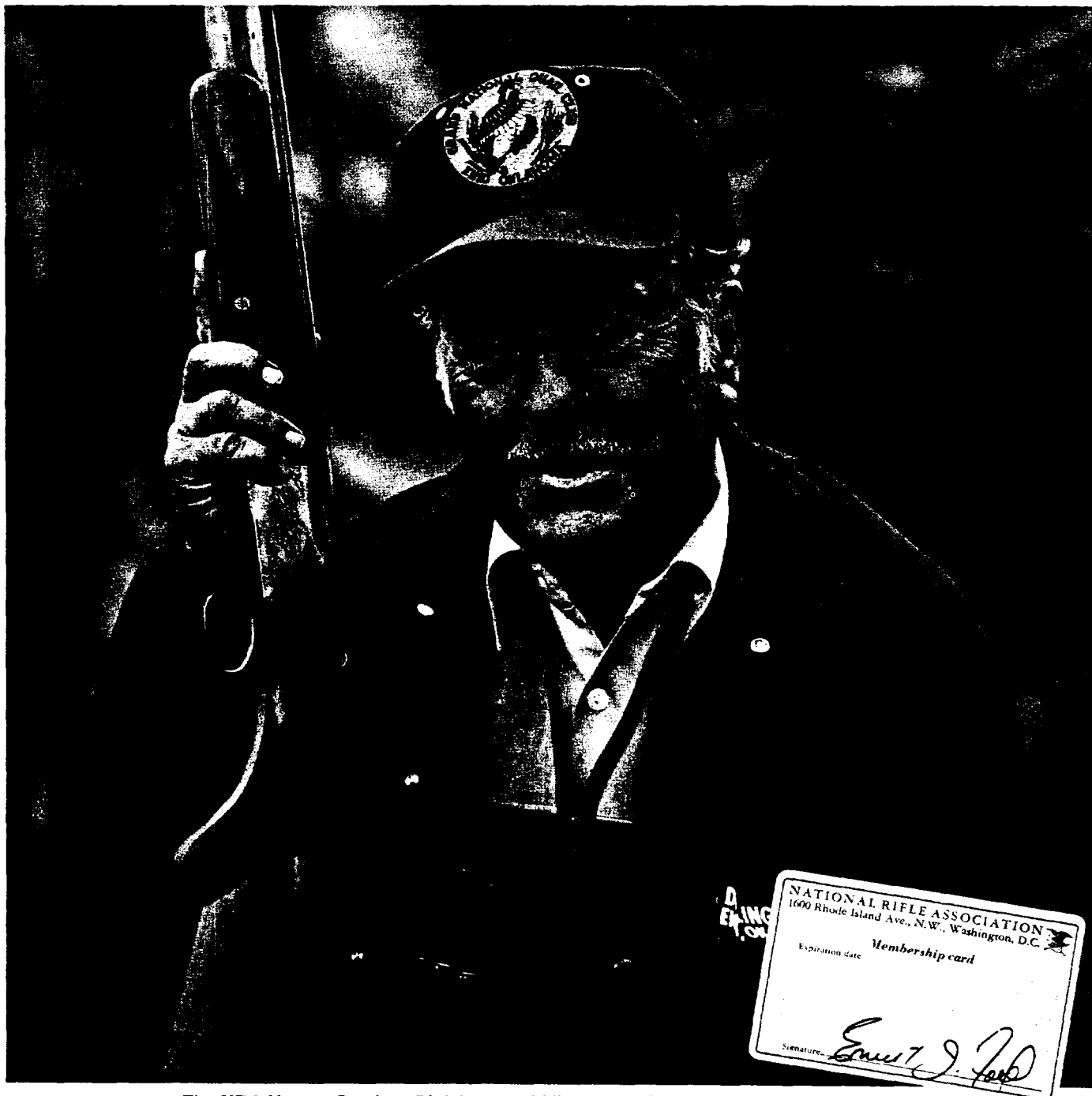
TENNESSEE ERNIE FORD: Recording Artist; Television Star;
Hunter and Sportsman;
Member of the National Rifle Association.

"The NRA has given me a wonderful opportunity to get to know interesting people from all walks of life who love the great outdoors.

"My sons live in Nashville and when I go back there we hunt quail and squirrel. I'm very proud of those boys and I get a good feeling knowing that I helped them get started in hunting just like my dad helped me when I was a boy.

"I've been a member of the NRA for about fifteen years and I'll continue to be an NRA booster for as long as I live. I'm glad I can tell folks about the hunter safety work the NRA does and I hope others will join this fine organization that has done so much for me."

I'm the NRA.



The NRA Hunter Services Division would like to remind all outdoor enthusiasts that hunters play an important role in wildlife conservation. Responsible hunting helps to preserve this country's game species for future generations. If you would like to join the NRA and want more information about our programs and benefits, write Harlon Carter, Executive Vice President, P.O. Box 37484, Dept. EF-15, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Paid for by the members of the National Rifle Association of America.

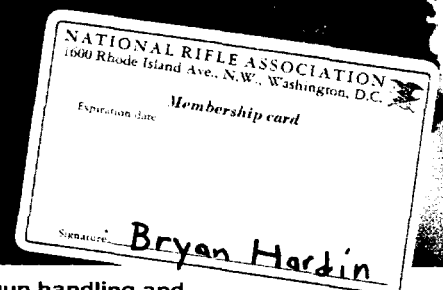
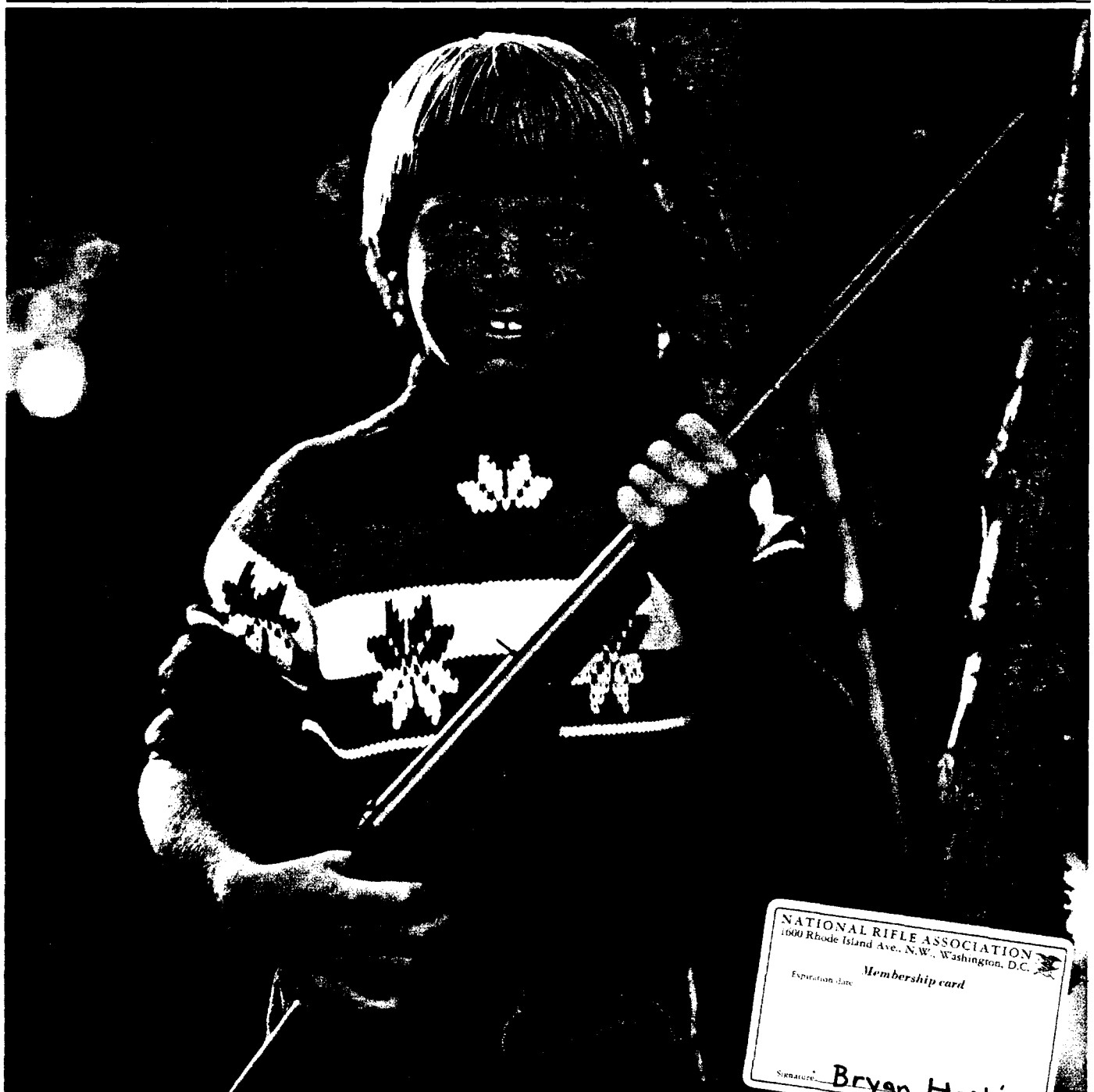
BRYAN HARDIN: 8 years old. Second grade student and a member of the National Rifle Association.

"I like to play football best. But I like my dog and I like my new BB gun. When I got it, I wanted to shoot that night, but my Dad said I had to learn the rules first. He taught me about safety and to always remember a gun is not a toy.

"We made a target out of a box in the back yard, and my Dad showed me how to aim. I didn't hit it the first time, but then I started doing better. I just need to practice more so I can go hunting with my Grandfather. He said he'd take me when I got older and after I learned some more rules.

"My Dad's a member of the NRA and so am I because he says they need kids like me to grow up and keep shooting a safe sport."

I'm the NRA.



Each year, NRA members teach thousands of young people safe gun handling and basic marksmanship skills. If you would like to join the NRA and want more information about our programs and benefits, write Harlon Carter, Executive Vice President, P.O. Box 37484, Dept. BH-9, Washington, D.C. 20066.

Paid for by the members of the National Rifle Association of America.

BRIAN KUBRICKY: Sixteen years old; High School Junior; Hunter; Award-winning Competitive Shooter; Member of the National Rifle Association.

"When I was a small boy I injured my back and I've had to use braces or a wheelchair ever since. As I got older I looked for a sport I could do well in and that allowed me to compete with my friends on a more equal basis. I found shooting gave me that chance.

"I joined my high school shooting team and my coach encouraged me to enter several matches and tournaments.

"But I wouldn't even have the opportunity to shoot in the first place if it wasn't for the NRA. I got a variance from them that gives me special permission to shoot from my wheelchair. The NRA has given me a chance to do something I like and can enjoy the rest of my life."

I'm the NRA.



The NRA Junior Olympic Shooting Program offers young people the opportunity to compete on the local, state and national levels. These instructional competitions are open to any young person interested in shooting. If you would like to join the NRA and want more information about our programs and benefits, write Harlon Carter, Executive Vice President, P.O. Box 37484, Dept. BK-28, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Paid for by the members of the National Rifle Association of America.

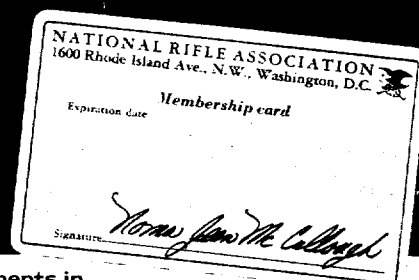
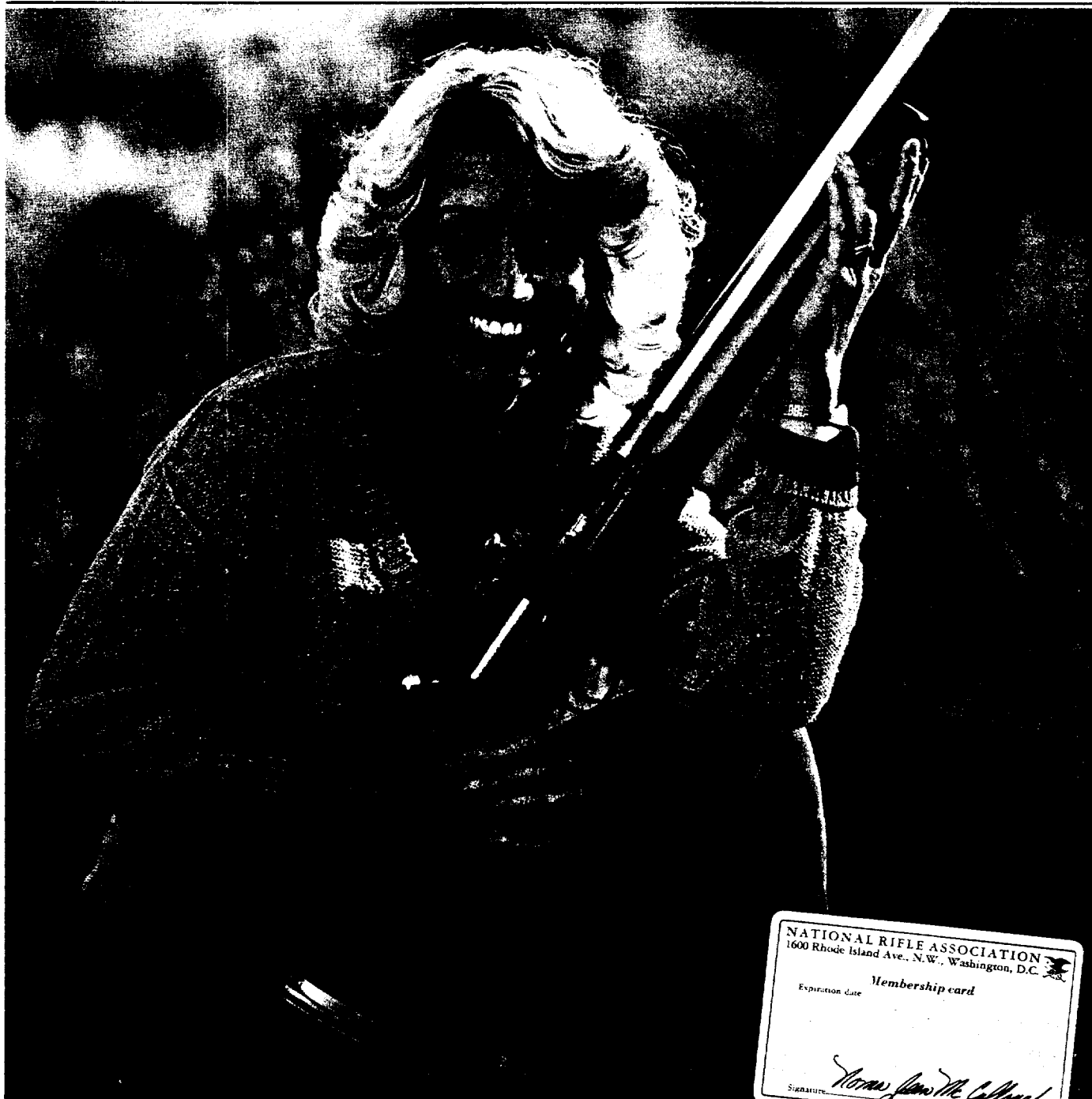
NOMA McCOLLOUGH: Wife, mother and High Power Shooting Champion.
Two-time National Women's Champion and
the first woman to ever win the 1000 yard Wimbledon Championship.
Member of the National Rifle Association.

"Most people are surprised when I tell them I still shoot for fun.
But it's true. I find competitive shooting very relaxing and personally satisfying.

"Ever since I started winning some big matches and competing equally with men,
I hear many women say 'You only weigh 100 pounds! If you can do it, so can I.'
And I tell them they don't have to be champions to win at shooting. A person can win
at trying. Practicing, getting better and enjoying yourself are the real rewards.

"I'm a member of the NRA and so is my husband. They do so much
to support competition and protect shooting programs. And thanks to the NRA,
I'll continue to compete and my children will grow up
with the same opportunity to enjoy the sport."

I'm the NRA.



Last year, the NRA sanctioned over 6,000 tournaments in
24 shooting disciplines involving more than 100,000 men and women.
If you would like to join the NRA and want more information
about our programs and benefits, write Harlon Carter, Executive Vice President,
P.O. Box 37484, Dept. NM-11, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Paid for by the members of the National Rifle Association of America.

ROY ROGERS: Motion Picture and Television Star; Founder of the Sons of the Pioneers; Hunter and Gun Collector; Life Member of the National Rifle Association

"I don't believe in doing a commercial or letting someone use my name unless I really believe in it from the heart. Well, I can truly say I'm proud to be associated with the NRA.

"I've hunted and collected guns all my life. We were very poor when I was growing up in Ohio, so as a boy I'd hunt small game for food. That's when I first learned to appreciate guns and the outdoors.

"Hunting is the best way I know for families to be together and have fun. I'd urge anybody who has kids to join and support the NRA. Without the NRA, hunting would not be the popular and safe sport it is today."

I'm the NRA.



The NRA Hunter's Code of Ethics emphasizes safety, good sportsmanship and wildlife conservation. It is an essential part of the training materials that the NRA provides to hunter safety instructors in all fifty states. If you would like to join the NRA and want more information about our programs and benefits, write Harlan Carter, Executive Vice President, P.O. Box 37484, Dept. RR-2, Washington, D.C. 20013.

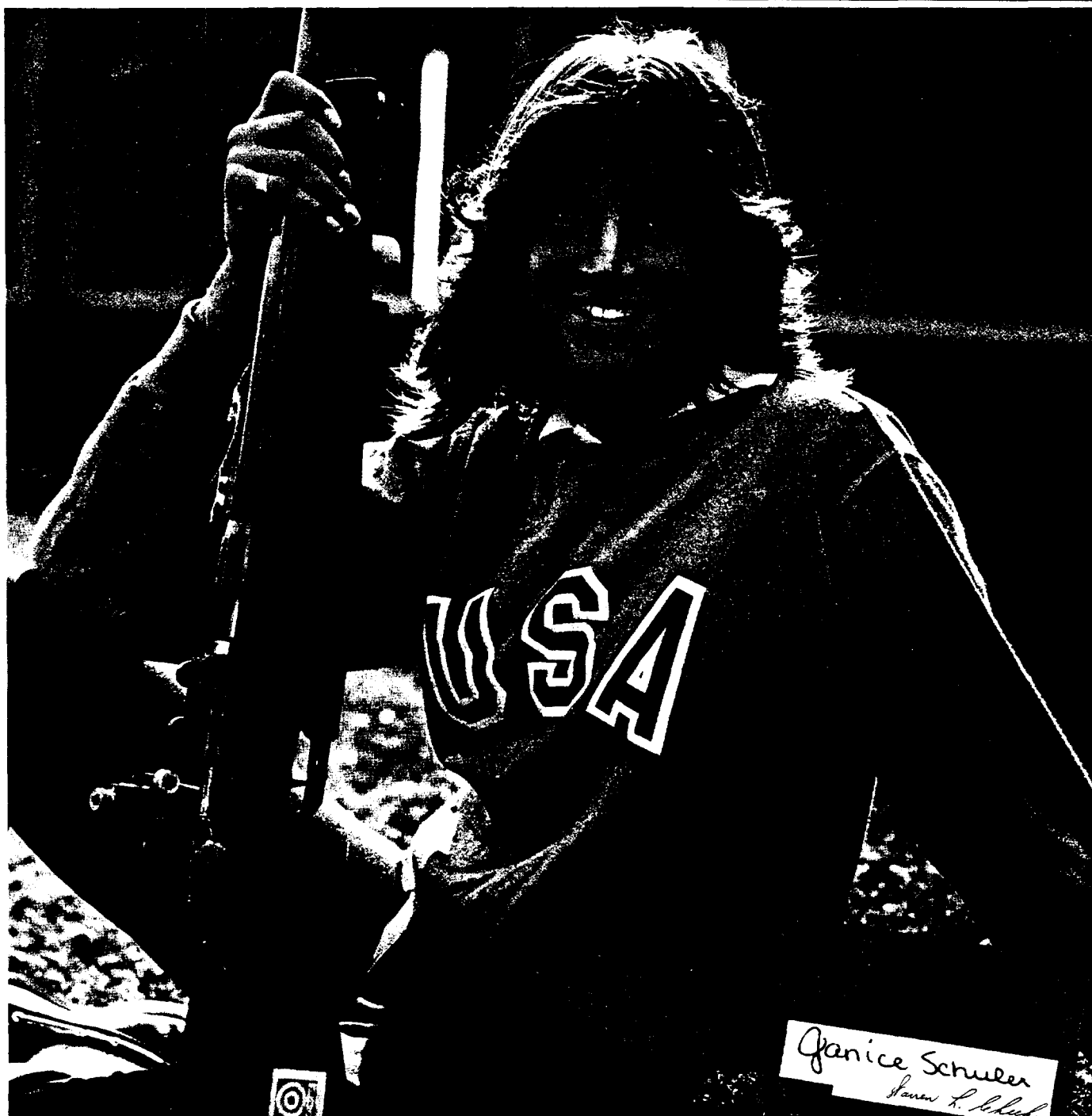
Paid for by the members of the National Rifle Association of America.

JANICE SCHULER: Eighteen years old. High school senior and National Scholastic Shooting Champion. Member of the U.S. Shooting Team and Life Member of the National Rifle Association.

"I've been shooting competitively since I was seven years old. It's been a sacrifice, but it's been worth it because I've had the chance to travel, meet people and learn a lot about myself. I practice about nine hours a week in the range at school because I want to make the Olympic Team and try to get a shooting scholarship for college.

My dad bought me a NRA Life Membership when I was fourteen, and I'll always be grateful to all the members for promoting competitive shooting and giving me the chance to do well at something I enjoy so much."

I'm the NRA.



The NRA is the national governing body for the shooting sports. It raises money, selects and trains the people who represent America in shooting competitions around the world, including the Olympics. If you would like to join the NRA and want more information about our programs and benefits, write Harlon Carter, Executive Vice President, P.O. Box 37484, Dept. JS-4, Washington, D.C. 20006.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹John Adkins, letter to Nancy Buchanan, 4 December 1984, p. 1.
- ²Tom Zito, "Shooting for a Better Image at the NRA," Washington Post, 19 April 1982, p. B2.
- ³"Gun Owners' Ad Campaign Aims for Better Image," Association Management, November 1982, p. 11.
- ⁴Carol McGraw, "NRA's Ads Shooting for New Image," Los Angeles Tribune, 4 May 1982, p. 1.
- ⁵Adkins, p. 1.
- ⁶Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), p. 52.
- ⁷Richard E. Crable and Steven L. Vibbert, "Mobil's Epideictic Advocacy: 'Observations' of Prometheus-Bound," Communication Monographs, 50(December 1983), 384.
- ⁸Stephen Toulmin, The Uses of Argument (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 120.
- ⁹Crable and Vibbert, 381.
- ¹⁰"Liberals: the NRA's Best Friends," The Washington Monthly, April 1983, p. 40.
- ¹¹McGraw, p. 1.
- ¹²Clara Germani, "Pro-Gun Lobby Turns from Polishing Its Firearms to Polishing Its Image," Christian Science Monitor, 14 July 1982, p. 7.
- ¹³Germani, p. 7.
- ¹⁴"Leading the Call to Arms," Time, 20 April 1981, p. 27.
- ¹⁵Bill Abrams, "NRA Tries to Soften Its Image with 'Laid Back' Advertising," Wall Street Journal, 4 February 1982, p. 33.
- ¹⁶McGraw, p. 1.
- ¹⁷"Liberals: the NRA's Best Friends," p. 40.
- ¹⁸Adkins, p. 1.
- ¹⁹Adkins, p. 2.

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